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HAS U.N.O. FAILED?

By Fred Malm Ryde

THOSE who believe that the fear of the H-bomb is sufficient to prevent the outbreak of a major war must have had their faith shaken by the latest crisis in the Far East. That is not to say that the thought of nuclear war does not impose caution on quarrelling nations, reinforced by the pleas of anxious allies, but fear is not enough. In the Quemoy situation, both sides, with full awareness of the possible consequences, have been engaged in feats of brinkmanship unsurpassed since the explosion at Hiroshima turned war into racial suicide. Granted that without that fear war would have been inevitable, it still remains true that fear has not kept the world from the very edge of war and that it has been fortune as much as anything else which has prevented it from tumbling over.

The quarrel has its unique aspects, but it is in essence an example of a common and particularly dangerous kind of international dispute, where both sides are convinced of the rightness of their cause, the necessity for firmness, and the impossibility of withdrawal or concession. The position of the People's Republic of China should be easily understood, for there is no government in the world today, no matter how pacifically inclined, that would tolerate, if it could help it, a highly armed rival government perched on an adjacent island and with outposts a few miles offshore, particularly if armed, supplied, and protected by a hostile Power. It is not a situation in which acquiescence comes easy, or in which men are willing to take council with fear, or even with prudence. The United States Government, on the other hand, may very well wish that it had not committed itself so deeply to an alliance so dangerous and unrewarding, but the fact remains that it has so committed itself as to make withdrawal difficult. If it is hard to see why the American Government allowed itself to get in the present position of defending islands so close to the China coast, it is easy to understand its reluctance to leave an ally in the lurch. And so, both sides are in a position where retreat is very difficult indeed, and where the fear of war itself is used in a highly dangerous game of bluff, through which even the smallest clash may lead to a war which it may prove impossible to localize.

Blame on Propaganda?

The dispute is an intractable one, but not uniquely so—not more so than others which have flared up to threaten the peace of the world in the past few years, and which still exist in a more or less quiescent state. The main factor

which makes it more dangerous than these others is that the People's Republic is not represented in the United Nations, so that it is difficult to see how it can be referred to that body. For it is precisely in such a situation as this that the United Nations has shown its greatest worth and proved its necessity. It is noteworthy that, contrary to the intentions and expectations of the founders, it is not the Security Council which has fulfilled this function of preserving peace. Dominated by the Great Powers, it has remained a sounding-board for their quarrels—another instrument in the Cold War. The presence of the People's Republic of China in one of the permanent seats would not presumably improve it in this respect. It is the General Assembly which has stepped in to take the place that the Security Council has left vacant. Its growing prestige and effectiveness is surprising, because a large assembly in which all powers from the smallest to the greatest are equally represented hardly seems a very practical instrument. But the very characteristics which seem to make it inevitably unwieldy and unrealistic have permitted the weight of concern of the middling and small powers to be expressed and asserted, and for a comparatively moral and disinterested leadership to arise.

The General Assembly has in the past few years built up an atmosphere in which propaganda and intransigence are discouraged, at least when life-and-death matters are before it, and has given concrete expression to the will of mankind to survive. This is particularly true of the last Emergency Assembly when, we are told, both Russia and the U.S.A. were prepared to pull out all the stops in a great spate of mutual denunciation, but had to change their minds owing to the temper of the Assembly. It is true that on this occasion its achievement was negative in that no positive solution to the real problem before it was reached. The same is true of other previous occasions. Indeed it is hard to think of any serious dispute that has really been settled in these post-war years. But, time and again, some arrangement has been made, even if only a face-saving formula, which has lowered the temperature and kept the spark out of the powder-barrel. This achievement may be considerably less than we looked for from the United Nations when it was set up, but in our desperately precarious situation, it is a function of infinite value. We are very much in need of even a face-saving formula in the Far East at the moment—and of the moral pressure which would induce the two sides to accept it. It is indeed as

much as we can at present hope for. There is no hope at all that the dispute will be solved. The People's Republic will not give up its claim to Formosa, nor its hostility to a rival government. The United States will not withdraw its protection from Formosa. Everybody knows that what is needed is for the offshore islands to be evacuated and for a tacit truce to be accepted between the two sides. As for the permanent solution, that can only be left to time, which in the end settles all disputes. It is indeed devoutly to be hoped that the bilateral talks in Warsaw will lead to such a provisional conclusion, but the chances of success would be far greater in the Assembly, where the passion of the world's concern would be brought to bear.

Nothing is more misleading than to regard the United Nations as an idealistic institution which would have some

chance of success in happier and more peaceful times, but is condemned to failure in the present jungle of international affairs. On the contrary, it is born of necessity—made inevitable by the dangers that confront us. It is that same necessity which has preserved it through these troublous years. That same necessity has increased the power and prestige of the General Assembly to fill the gap left by the weakness of the Security Council, and has elevated the Secretary-General to his present unique position in the world. All this has happened through the pressure of events, in spite of a public opinion apathetic and indifferent when it is not roused to bouts of fervid nationalism. Its true effectiveness waits for ordinary people to realize the work it has already done and the far greater work that it would do with their loyalty and support.

"AGE v. YOUTH"

By Dudley Richards

IS there a "problem of youth"? There is no objection to the expression provided that by problem we mean something that demands our attention and concentrated thought, not merely something that worries us. If there is really a "problem of youth", let us properly define it, and then look for its solution.

Life itself may be declared to be a problem, for it poses all sorts of questions to which we would like to find answers. But within life there are many things which are not so much problems as annoying or disturbing facts which we have to take for granted. For example, the "problem of youth" may mean no more than that young people behave like young people. Their behaviour may be free and unrestrained to the extent of riotousness. Their opinions may be strong, violent, and, in the eyes of their elders, dangerously radical or cynical. These things are normal: they can usually be explained, and, as part of the recurrent pattern of life, they can be accepted. However, adults do not accept them very willingly. Rather, they think that there is something different about the rising generation, and that wildness, radicalism, and cynicism are reaching heights unknown in their own time. Here there is largely a failure of memory to blame. Is this faulty memory a problem, or is it also to be counted among these disturbing factors in the human situation which we can only accept?

Young people who are as free and bold as their parents will develop into men and women similar in many ways to their fathers and mothers. Wild extravagance in youth may be gradually replaced by the sober respectability of middle age. But young people are not *universally* wild or extravagant in either their behaviour or their opinions. They may be sober-minded explorers in the fields of both thought and action. Either by themselves or following the lead of advanced adults, they may range widely and deeply in a variety of ways, so as to be largely incomprehensible to their parents or to their adult acquaintances. The gap of understanding between such young people and their elders is much greater than the one that seems to separate youthful liveliness from the soberness of middle age. These youthful adventurers appear to live in a different world; they sometimes talk a language that their elders do not understand. They readily penetrate into territory which may seem to us strange, forbidding, and even hostile.

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Of course, we are willing to admit that the world in which we live with these young people is indeed different from the world of our youth. But while we can accept the external changes and be glad of modern gadgets, it is not easy for us to enter into the spirit of the new age. Nor are we content to say that we do not understand; sometimes we speak critically of modern movements in thought and art and literature; and sometimes we violently attack them. We may travel by air

and visit new countries; but in the realm of thought and feeling we prefer to remain in safe and known ways, familiar to us from our childhood. But the questing and adventurous youth was born into a different world, a world which is heir to the past, but which is critically examining, sorting, transforming, and extending its inheritance. He is not sure of an eternal norm of either thought or behaviour; he takes less for granted; he is analysing and searching. This is not a new phenomenon in the history of mankind; in all ages there have been restless, inquiring spirits whose activities have been watched uneasily by their contemporaries. A sort of instinct of self-preservation has operated in humanity, making it suspicious of change and fearful of new developments which threaten to change the familiar, and therefore secure, surroundings to which it has become accustomed. But in our time this situation is probably more acute than it has ever been before; the pace of development has increased, change is more frequent and rapid, and there is an interplay of thought and action throughout the entire world, the effects of which may be felt across whole continents in a few days or hours.

If all this activity were only in the world outside the church, we might take refuge within our community and thank God that there at any rate the old order was unchanged. But these young adventurers are within our own gates. As seekers after truth they ought to be welcome amongst Unitarians and to feel entirely at home. For we have proclaimed the importance of taking nothing for granted in religion, and of searching and testing what we find. But whatever statements may be made from the pulpit or on paper, it is not harsh to say that as a community we are characterized by social respectability and sound middle-class morality rather than by a lively sense of the adventure and excitement of the religious quest. Besides, we have a fairly settled idea of what religion is, as well as of morality, and the searchings and findings of the young inquirer may not seem to have much connection with either, so far as we feel capable of going with him or of comprehending his language. It is not surprising if we are sometimes perplexed to the point of uneasiness, or if we console ourselves with the thought that the world in a recognizable and acceptable form will last our own time and that we shall not live to see the further fearful changes that are bound to come. In brief, our reaction may be typically human but irreligious.

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The Bible has occupied a prominent place in our religious tradition. It may be helpful to remind ourselves of some of its teachings. There is the familiar story of Gamaliel, telling us not to be anxious about new doctrine, for if it is not from God it will come to nothing. There is the ninetieth Psalm. Life is short, and may be burdensome; it is marked by change and decay; but there is God, the abiding dwelling-place in all generations. Grass and flowers fade, proclaims Isaiah; so do people, with, we may add, their ideas and attitudes; but the word of God stands for ever.

If there is no abiding dwelling-place, except in death, then change may distress us, though it need not surprise us. But if there is God, the dwelling-place in all generations, why should we be distressed or afraid? We must consider whether we have not mistaken the familiar circle of our own thoughts and feelings for our spirits' permanent abode; and whether our bewilderment and uneasiness at new teachings and ideas does not arise from the doubt and uncertainty of our own hearts.

Are we standing firmly on a rock? Then we must watch with sympathetic anxiety the efforts that others make to reach it. We must encourage them with cheering words and throw them a life-line when the chance is given us. But since we reached the rock, the tide has risen higher and the waters are flowing more swiftly. Dare we plunge in and join those who are still struggling in the sea? It may be that through our knowledge, our experience, and our strength, we shall be enabled to bring them to our safe resting-place. It may be that from the deep waters we shall see a higher and safer resting-place for us all. What surely we cannot believe, if we go with them, is that either we or they should be drowned.

"A NAUGHTY BOOK ABOUT A COMET"

By Roger Thomas

SOME time ago the question was somewhat jocularly raised in *The Inquirer* how it came about that the puritanical, not to say bigoted, Presbyterians of the mid-seventeenth century came to be the forerunners of the tolerant and reasonable Unitarians that we are (or think we are) today. The answer would be a long, difficult, and intricate story, at best incomplete in many important particulars, and not to be attempted in a short article. But an interesting sidelight is the changing attitude to superstition of two and a half centuries ago.

Let anyone look into Richard Baxter's *Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits* . . . fully evinced by the unquestionable histories of apparitions, operations, witchcrafts, voices, etc. . . of 1691, and he will find himself plunged into a queer world of crude superstitions, from which we can only be glad that his successors have escaped—and Baxter was by no means the most credulous of the Puritans of his day. Between the date of that work and the death of Queen Anne there was a considerable change of outlook. A salutary wind blowing from Holland, where all beliefs were officially tolerated by the State, had something to do with it, and it is worth recalling the number of Presbyterians who found it convenient to seek exile in that country during the reign of James II. They, too, may have had something to do with it. Amongst those who visited Holland (1688-91) was Edmund Calamy, who became minister of a Presbyterian congregation in Westminster, now represented by Stamford Street Chapel. From his memoirs we know that he was alive to what was passing in the world of thought. We know, too, that when others were carried away by the somewhat hysterical pretensions of certain "French Prophets" (including a prominent member of his own congregation, not to mention certain continental Calvinists), Calamy remained sceptical and objective.

A little later, in 1708 to be precise, there appeared an English translation of a French book published by Peter Bayle in Holland in 1683. Calamy at least had it on his shelves. Archbishop Wake, then Bishop of Lincoln, called it a naughty book about a Comet, and regarded it as the worst of the many bad books of the time. It was a clever book; with arguments that would hold equally against the many superstitions with which the Bible is all too plentifully sprinkled, it chose to attack the one superstition not represented in the Bible, viz. the belief that "When beggars die, there are no comets seen; the Heavens themselves blaze forth the deaths of princes". It set out also to demonstrate that atheism was better than idolatry, no religion better than superstition, and dropped not a few hints that much Christianity was guilty of

both idolatry and superstition. Bishop Wake might well think it a bad book if he got no further than the passage where Bayle argues that preachers, not being concerned with truth but with eloquence, find comets much to their liking, since comets as presages of evil lend wings to their eloquence; that poets like them because they embroider an otherwise empty tale; and that historians like them because history is akin to poetry (!), but that, in fact, a comet is no more the cause of calamity than is the little seamstress the cause of the grand horses and carriages she runs to the windows to gaze at. A keen wind was blowing from the east and blowing a great many cobwebs away. Wake was doubtless right in thinking that the influence of such a book was considerable. A few years later, we find a Deist proclaiming that in Holland "the Devil" was "everywhere banish'd", and that after 1688 in England "upon the liberty given and taken to think freely, the Devil's power visibly declined".

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It would be fascinating to trace the influence of these fresh winds of thought upon our Presbyterian ancestors in England, but for the most part it is hidden in the mists of the unrecorded, and we have to be content with a few straws that show which way the wind was blowing. We must be content with quoting two, which for all their slightness indicate nevertheless something of the newer ways of thought.

The first is a jesting passage of a twenty-four-year-old student, intended for the Presbyterian ministry, in a letter to his sister in 1716, reporting the brilliant display that year of the Aurora Borealis.

"Now I talk of news, did you see the strange light in the skies last Tuesday night? If you had as much of it as we, I doubt not but you have monsters and prodigies enough to fill a sheet with. Here [in London] it has been improved into armies fighting, heads appearing, and what not. One good woman in Moorfields sat preaching and preparing us all for the day of judgement. Another, who had a greater turn for politics than religion, explained it against the King for not relieving the two lords [captured in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715], till another informed us it was actually done, and so spoiled the scheme. But the best conjecture I heard was, that it was Lord Derwentwater's soul [another rebel] marching in state out of purgatory. Since then, indeed, I have met with some people (who were doubtless either Presbyterians or Atheists) that imagined the whole business was only a quantity of matter, of which, by reason of the hard weather, the air must be prodigiously full, set on fire by the increasing heat of the sun, as is usual in very cold countries. But a profane account is this I hope you will pay little regard to."

That collocation, "either Presbyterians or Atheists", is a pretty considerable straw in the wind, even if we do owe it to the irrepressible ebullience of a possibly irresponsible student. But the staid and eminently respectable Edmund Calamy also reports the exceptional brilliance of those Northern Lights of 1716 and the superstitious talk to which they gave rise, and cautiously only indicates his scepticism by a brief "Others [doubtless including himself] suspended their censures; and sights of that nature have since been frequent". It is perhaps of passing interest to note that the student was Thomas Secker, and at the time was beginning to despair of entering the Presbyterian ministry because of his unorthodoxy in other directions, and that eventually, as Alexander Gordon tartly put it, he sank to the level of an eighteenth-century archbishop.

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Our second straw shows that young students were not alone in their susceptibility to the advanced thought of the day. There is a story of James Peirce, at this time at the age of forty one of the four respected Presbyterian ministers in Exeter. He was famous for liberalizing the Presbyterians in other ways, but here we are only concerned with his scepticism in matters where superstition is so easily generated. It was another Presbyterian student, John Fox, who in later life wrote down the record.

"I remember", writes John Fox, "he told me a passage which befell him one night, which was somewhat uncommon. His study window, which looked into a church-yard, being open, as he stepped to draw it fast, he fancied he saw a horse without a head. It being dark, he imagined he might mistake, and, there-

fore, he looked more narrowly, and at last plainly perceived that it moved and walked as horses commonly do. He then shut his window, and though he was in no fear, having no opinion of such-like things, yet he was willing to be satisfied, and went and looked again. The same very plainly appeared and moved as before, and he left it in a very great uncertainty; but next morning, upon looking again into the yard, he discovered the delusion, for it was really a horse which was all white with a black head, and which, therefore, in the dark, could not be seen like the rest of the body. This he said confirmed his opinion, that all these things, fully examined, will prove mistakes occasioned either by a person's fear or some other accident, and this I mention to show somewhat of his way of thinking of such matters."

It is amusing to remember that the student who recorded this had been a friend of the other student, Thomas Secker, and became eventually a Deist and a member of the Church of England, and lived to congratulate (doubtless with his tongue in his cheek) the said Secker on his elevation to the bishopric of Bristol. But the important thing is that Peirce had set his face against the long and powerful tradition of superstitious thought. It is difficult for us to realize how great was the break with the past and how comparatively recent such changed outlook had been among more thoughtful Puritans. And it is all part of the story of a transformation which made later generations of Presbyterians almost the reverse of their historic progenitors.

RELIGION AND WORLD CIVILIZATION

By John Rowland

THERE are many differences which divide religious people.

Some of us feel, in the sphere of international relations, that the menace of Communism is the most striking feature of present-day international life, and that to struggle against this menace is the most urgent duty of what is sometimes called "The Free World"; others feel that since the United States and the Soviet Union will in the end have to come to some sort of compromise if humanity is to survive, the outlawing of the desperately dangerous nuclear weapons is the first task of mankind. Both of these points of view are arguable; but those who are on opposite sides of this ideological fence will probably agree that the most urgent need of our time, if it could only be translated into the terms of the practical, is the formation of an agreed basis for a world civilization.

Dr. W. E. Hocking, a veteran American thinker, whose name will be well known to readers of the *Hibbert Journal* and of other periodicals of advanced opinion in this country, has deliberately written his new book, *The Coming World Civilisation* (Allen & Unwin: 16s.), with this thought in mind, and has provided thoughtful people with some stimulating reading on his chosen theme. Probably Dr. Hocking himself would be the first to agree that much that he has to say is tentative, and that much of it, while arguable, is by no means sure. But at the same time, unless some of our leading thinkers are prepared to be frank and open on such matters, the differences that so painfully divide the twentieth-century world will not be settled, but will continue to bedevil international affairs into the indefinite future.

Dr. Hocking, unlike some who have written on this theme, does not belittle the part that religion may have to play; he states, however, that, outside the Marxist camp, there has been in recent years, not so much an attempt to combat the religious work of the churches, as to demonstrate that the State can provide all that is necessary for the good life. In the opinion, then, of those who take this line, the churches are not so much fought against as shown to be unnecessary, irrelevant to all that is going on in the political world. And there is, he would say, a very definite danger that the State may take over more and more of the direction of human life, until the churches are left high and dry, small detached communities which carry on their rites and their worship, quite isolated from all practical issues, and appealing to a smaller and smaller minority of backward-looking, elderly folk.

That this may be true of some churches, it would be very difficult to deny; and those who wish to see their churches alive to the real social issues of our day—the colour bar, the hydrogen bomb, education, punishment—must endeavour to ensure that those churches continue to face such problems and continue to state beyond all doubt what they consider to be the real Christian attitude to the puzzles that are dividing the civilized world.

"Every nation", says Dr. Hocking, "needs to build a bridge between the mind and the feelings". He adds that the State cannot do any such thing; it is only a church that can put right some of the errors of the secular state. When the church is pushed into the background, excised from the life of the community, he says that something is lost, not merely in the religious sense, but in the political sense as well. In a striking paragraph, he writes:

"We have taken it for granted that the State can deal with crime, as its most potent function in sustaining public order. We have believed that it can educate our young. We have assumed that, while leaving economic enterprise largely to its own energies, the State can cover the failures of the system, protecting individuals from destitution, caring for the aged and the ill. We have taken it as axiomatic that it can make just laws, and provide through a responsible legal profession for their due service to the people. We are discovering today, startled and incredulous, that the State by itself can do none of these things."

The important phrase there is "the State by itself"; the diagnosis is American, and the description might vary in some emphases in the Welfare State as we have it in Britain; but by and large there is a good deal in what Dr. Hocking says; even more so is it true in the international field, where the circle of fear, whether in Formosa or Germany, whether in Cyprus or Notting Hill, is seen to be a political circle, which can be broken only by non-political means.

The State by itself cannot dissolve the quite incredibly stupid antagonisms between East and West; the solution of those problems must in the end be religious solutions. If they are not solved along religious lines, they will never be solved at all; we shall gradually move into that international atmosphere which was so prophetically viewed by George Orwell—an atmosphere to which we are getting perilously close now, some time before 1984.

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Dr. Hocking closes his moving book with the suggestion that only by some kind of uniting of the great religions of the world can churches (taking that word in its widest possible sense) lead the human race to a more peaceful condition. It is, he would say, no more use blaming the evil Communists or the evil Capitalists for the present impasse than it is blaming the evil Christians or the evil Muslims or the evil Jews or the evil atheists. Only when all men of goodwill get together in one grand synthesis can world peace be assured—and that will be on a religious basis.

"Politics in the pulpit" is a favourite target of those who sit in the pews; yet some kind of politics in the pulpit will gradually become inevitable, unless religion is applied to politics and politics applied to religion, the human world will go down in one chaotic disaster. It says much for the common sense of the man in the street (and the man in the pew) that he is increasingly coming to see this. If the world is saved, Dr. Hocking would say, it will not be by the great men of the nations breaking down barriers, it will be by the common sense and the common idealism of the millions. And that may be nearer than we sometimes hope, certainly such books as *The Coming World Civilisation* will help mankind towards such a desirable consummation of the dearest wishes of many people on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

"AS OTHERS SEE US—"

Overheard on a bus whose route runs near to an English Unitarian chapel built in the Colonial (New England) style:

Helpful local passenger (to woman trying to describe a church to which she wished to book a ticket): "Oh, you mean that American church? They are very nice people, and nobody interferes with them."

Correspondence

Letters should be addressed to the Editor, "The Inquirer", 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C. 1. They should not in general exceed three to four hundred words in length.

Humanism or Asceticism?

SIR.—Your front-page contributor this week sees fit to travesty "English spirituality" by identifying it with the "ascetic" outlook on life. Let us be realistic. Our ministers do not choose poverty—they choose to preach their gospel; and our laity do not choose, of set purpose, to have an underpaid ministry and shabby or cold churches. No; but the people of this country, in general, have far less wealth than the Americans, and they choose to make the first call upon their resources the provision of those material things which they think it essential to enjoy or possess. The minority who go on to contribute anything for the upkeep of churches, as centres of spiritual life, feel (it seems) unable to spare more than will maintain stipends and premises at the present level. We are not the only body facing this problem. There is surely no "asceticism" anywhere in the situation; there is plain materialism threatening to overcome the recognition of spiritual values. Nobody, in fact, is "saying 'No' to the good things of this life"—on the contrary, the prevailing attitude is to seize on them as if they were all that mattered. It is difficult to see how "humanism" is to help unless it recognizes that "the things of the spirit" do possess a claim and a value in human life, and must be upheld at some sacrifice, where necessary, of the things of the flesh.—Yours,

Wandsworth.

Dorothy Tarrant.

Pythagoras, Huson and Tarrant

SIR.—I did not see Mr. Hobart Huson's letter in *The Inquirer* on September 6 until this week. I am not qualified to contribute to the discussion about Pythagoras; but, as a former student of Dr. Tarrant's at London University and as a member of the Classical Association, I feel I must protest against the lack of courtesy displayed in Mr. Huson's letter.

Mr. Huson is clearly a scholar who has done much painstaking research into the literature concerning Pythagoras, and one might therefore have expected a little more research into the qualifications of other scholars whom he criticizes. He is evidently unaware that Dr. Tarrant is at this moment president of the Classical Association in this country, and has recently been president of the Hellenic Society. It is hardly complimentary to her or to these learned societies to assume that the only woman upon whom they have ever (I believe) bestowed their highest office is unworthy of a courteous reply.—Yours,

Birmingham.

E. M. Montgomery.

"Simplicitas"

SIR.—I opened my *Inquirer* last Friday and was delighted, as I always am, to see that there was another article by "Simplicitas".

We lay folk are not perfect, and we mustn't get into the way of thinking that we are. But how kindly and lovingly "Simplicitas" examines our follies, and with what truth and insight!

And wasn't the episode of the Secretary's New Pen a gem? It was a touching tribute, from a minister, to the good that some of us, at any rate, achieve for our community by undramatic, quiet, constructive work.

If writing of that quality is "lowering the standard" of *The Inquirer*, let's get the rest of the paper down there quick!—Yours,

Fitchley, London.

Alastair Ross.

SIR.—On behalf of my two sisters and myself, I wish to say how very much we appreciate the articles by "Simplicitas".

We feel disappointed when on issue of *The Inquirer* is not relieved by a contribution by him. The follies which he gently and amusingly points out are common to so many of us.—Yours,

Wandsworth.

Lilian Bond.

The Communion Service

SIR.—There is an aspect of the communion service controversy deserving of more attention. It is the unsatisfactory position that has arisen out of the practice of building Unitarian churches on a similar plan to the Anglican, i.e. nave leading to chancel or apse. There is nothing wrong in this, aesthetically the arrangement is the most satisfying. But whereas the orthodox have no doubts whatsoever as to a use for their chancel, Unitarians haven't the vaguest idea. The reasons are simple: the orthodox design

grew out of the communion rite itself. This was something to be enacted, and, therefore, a smaller projection from the main building was a necessity.

Contrast the Unitarian position. We have no special use for a chancel. It is not a place apart, a sanctuary in fact. If it houses a table, it can never be regarded as an altar. The whole area dwindles in significance.

I suggest that if the table became something more than a repository for flower vases, but a place where the offertory could be received from the sidesmen and bestowed with dignity, if both the petitionary portion of the service and the benediction were made from this point, the gain would be considerable.

Finally, there are, in "Orders of Worship", a number of Additional Litanies and Acts of Devotion; one of them is actually called an "Act of Communion". If these could be regarded seriously and recited from the point mentioned, it might do something to fill the vacuum created by the disuse of the communion service. Who knows but what it might go some way to heal the breach between opposing views?—Yours,

Leyton, London.

Reginald C. Karger.

Cambridge Students, Please

SIR.—The Cambridge Terms begins on October 7. I would be grateful if you would allow me, through your columns, to ask the ministers and members of our congregations to send me the names and addresses of any students known to them who are coming into residence at the beginning of the academic year.—Yours,

11 Chesterton Hall Crescent,
Cambridge.

H. Stewart Carter.

University of London Unitarian Society

Unitarians entering London University this October may wish to join in the activities of the Unitarian Society. If so, they should contact the secretary, Richard Bambridge, Bentham Hall, Cartwright Gardens, London, W.C.1.

News Review

A Unitarian Barred.—One had thought that today a prominent M.P. would be welcome in most Free Church pulpits on special occasions. That this is not so is shown by the fact that the Rev. R. W. Sorensen, our minister at Walthamstow and an M.P. of long standing, has been refused admittance to a Methodist pulpit in York.

The occasion was International Co-operative Day service on July 6. York Co-operative Society invited Mr. Sorensen to be the preacher. In April, Mr. Sorensen accepted the invitation. In May, he was informed that the stewards of Wesley Chapel, Friary Street, York, had agreed to the use of the chapel, but stipulated that the preacher must not be either a Roman Catholic or a Unitarian.

Methodist headquarters state that the responsibility for admission of other than their own ordained ministers and lay preachers to pulpits rests with the superintendent minister of the circuit, and his decision would be upheld. No decision has ever been taken by Conference on the admission of Unitarians, since the matter has never arisen.

Two prominent Methodist ministers have personally expressed deep regret to Mr. Sorensen; the York Society invited another preacher; the Co-operative Press declined to publish a letter from Mr. Sorensen on the grounds that it might well lead to religious controversy, and there the matter rests. Surely we have reached a sad state of affairs when such a body as the Co-operative movement has to institute theological tests for those it wishes to honour on such a great occasion. We are often asked why Unitarians are not invited to undertake such services when they have rendered great service to the community, and regrettably we give this as one example of why we are omitted.

Crowe: On Sunday, September 7, a united service was held with the congregations from Macclesfield, Congleton, Newcastle, and Nantwich churches. The Rev. D. G. Foote conducted the service, and quartets were sung by the Macclesfield Male Voice Quartet. Two pieces were sung by the scholars of the Crowe Sunday School. It was a most enjoyable service, with a congregation of 200.

Dundee: Sunday, September 7, was a warm, sunny day, and eighty of the congregation journeyed to Aberdeen for the annual United Service to commemorate the beginning of Unitarianism in Scotland by the Rev. William Christie in 1792. A halt was made

(Continued on back page)

THE INQUIRER

YOUTH SUPPLEMENT

BY THE UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEAGUE

[The following letter was written to the Editor by GRENVILLE NEEDHAM, who attended the International Religious Fellowship Conference in America this summer as the representative of FOY. He is the secretary of the British I.R.F. Committee. GRENVILLE comes originally from Altrincham, but is now a schoolteacher in Leicester.]

R.M.S. *Queen Mary*.

A day out from Southampton.

Dear Eileen,

HERE we are lazing in the sun on the sports deck, doing little more than turning over and over in our minds the exciting and enriching experiences of the last four weeks in America. You will know the outline of the month—the journey to Montreal on the *Saxonia*, the I.A.R.F. Congress in the University in Chicago, followed by four days in Madison, Wisconsin, for the I.R.F. Conference, the journey down to North Carolina for the Continental Convention of the American Liberal Religious Youth, and finally, a few last days of concentrated sightseeing before this journey home and back to you all in Britain.

Of the journey on the *Saxonia*, I will simply say that it exceeded all expectations. The accommodation and service on this beautiful ship were superb. Moreover, we were already in fine international company—in our "Religious Freedom" group, sixty-odd of the famous and less famous names from at least Holland, France, Germany, Switzerland, and, of course, Britain.

Our introduction to America took place in Detroit, the city built round the hub of American life, the automobile. We were driven out from the city centre along the four-lane expressway. The next day we visited the Ford factory, set amidst parking lots for 24,000 employees' cars. In the afternoon we drove out of town to a shopping centre tastefully appointed with flowers and sculpture and quiet music. It was also in the centre of a huge parking space. And then on the Saturday, August 9, we were whisked 250 miles along the state turnpikes to Chicago.

Chicago was big, hot, and not very beautiful. You will hear from others of the main I.A.R.F. meetings. Into the round of dinners, theme talks, business meetings, and panels, we squeezed shopping, a visit downtown, and swimming in Lake Michigan, and we met people. Particularly we got to know the twenty or so young people from Europe who had arrived a month before us, and had already been on one of the six car tours which the American I.R.F. Committee had arranged, two of them right across to see the Pacific. And we met, and in many cases re-met, the Americans who had led these tours. They were the first among the many who provided us with the overwhelming hospitality which characterized the whole of our visit.

Undoubtedly the most important work in Chicago was done in the small panel discussions. The preamble to the group findings and the conclusions of the groups discussing current affairs form some of the finest work I have ever seen from our liberal religious groups. I hope some, at least, will be reprinted for wider reading. I joined the group discussing "Science in the Modern World". It was immensely interesting to cavendish on three scientists, all of whom I would hesitate to describe as theists, discussing the frontiers of science, religion, and philosophy. That it took place under the auspices of a religious body made it all the more interesting, and at the same time somehow disturbing. It troubled the Dutch young people particularly to find that the Americans at least seemed to accept the attitudes of these men, and of the many other humanists we met, as "religious". We thought and talked long and hard about this at I.R.F. and afterwards, and will be doing so again more formally at next year's conference in Britain.

Madison, where our most important I.R.F. meetings took place, is a beautiful city. It has its university and its capital, and is set between two lakes, heavenly warm for swimming and lovely just to look at. We met in simple but adequate buildings on the county fairground, and in three and a half days seemed to do everything we normally do in a week. We had three lectures on the theme-subject, "Social Welfare—Who Cares?" from the Rev. Donald Harrington, from New York. He led us to discuss the general, and in some cases the specific, organization of a society which could provide work, security, and health for its members, and at the same time leave them free to use but not abuse their individual initiatives and abilities. Don took an unusually socialistic viewpoint for an American—in most circles here, socialism is not considered a nice word—but it served to draw from us all details of the organization of our own industries, medicine, schooling, and welfare organizations. It also forced us to look at them in the light of the ideals of co-operation and service. Very valuable. In connection with the theme, we visited local services. I joined a group going to the Mendota State Mental Hospital.

We visited the Madison "Meeting House" twice, for a social evening on the Saturday and on the Sunday for morning worship. This building is a truly inspired creation of Frank Lloyd Wright. It is a moving experience simply to sit in the auditorium, to sit, as it were, inside praying hands, inside a vast "Tinker" tent, with the roof soaring up on either side from almost ground level behind you to 40 ft. at the apex. The walls are of rough stone, and through the tall windows in the prow the foliage and the trees give an incredible sense of the unity of the man-created and the natural world. But I hope to have a chance to show you pictures of this.

The business of these days was very satisfactory. We have done much detailed planning for next year's conference—it will be the third and fourth weeks of July, at Barnston in the Wirral. We will be considering the often conflicting ideals of "Religious Freedom and Religious Commitment". I will be on the executive next year as conference manager; and Donald Dunkley we have elected to the position of president so that he can carry on the excellent leadership he has been giving during the past two years.

Of the rest of the tour I must be too brief. We spent the next two weeks travelling down by car to North Carolina. We stayed each night at one of our churches. At Indianapolis and Knoxville, there were brand-new churches, symbolizing the growth of Unitarianism in these mid-American states. We crossed the Great Smokies—trees, mountains, and haze for mile after mile. We heard of and saw the work of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and we visited Oak Ridge, "the city of the atomic bomb". They showed us virtually nothing. On the last night at Charlotte, we had dinner, dancing and singing. On the Sunday morning who should we find preaching but Henry Cheetham?

Officially we were just observers at the I.R.V. Convention, but we organized an international evening of sketches, dances, and songs. We led one of the services. There were services there and humanist, held by electric, candle, and fire-light, spoken or danced, with the most imagination from the gramophone, piano, guitar, recorder, or just voice. We stood amazed at the incredible amount the duplicator consumed. And we talked again, about education, and humanism, and cars and their radio, and the way the Americans tackle the problem of integrating many races and nationalities into their one nation. I'll remember this holiday not primarily for the songs or for the sights, but for the way so many of these problems became real for us, and I hope a little better understood.

And, of course, it's been a holiday of friendships. Whatever we may think of "the Americans", there are certainly some fine people among them. We must be eternally grateful to such organizations as our I.R.F. for giving us a chance to meet like this, both in America and Europe, and to learn to know and understand each other better.

Very sincerely,

GRENVILLE

Change of Address

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Please note that from October 1 our address will be as follows:

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Telephone: COVEnt Garden 2384.

Only matters of urgency can be dealt with during the removal period, September 29 to October 6.

N.B.—"The Inquirer" remains at
14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1

UNITARIAN COLLEGE, MANCHESTER

New Session, 1958-59

Opening Address on Wednesday, October 1, at 3 p.m.
by

the Rev. W. Joyce L. Hazlehurst, M.A., B.D.

"Winged Words: Some Thoughts on Communication"
followed by Tea and the Annual Meeting of Subscribers

Nominations for the College Committee should reach Mr. C. K. Robinson, 878 Hyde Road, Manchester 18, by Tuesday, September 30. Members of the Committee must be College Subscribers, and their consent to nomination must be obtained beforehand.

FREE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, DONCASTER

Ministers and Laymen are invited to act as Supplies at the above Church. Please write:

MR. W. LLOYD,
33 The Grove, Whitley Hills,
Doncaster.

Deaths

Worsley.—On September 15, 1958, peacefully at her home in Bristol, Katherine Grace Hughes Worsley, last surviving daughter of the late Philip John Worsley, of Rodney Lodge, Bristol. Aged 83.

Hamblin.—On September 11, Frances Henrietta, dearly loved wife of Robert A. Hamblin, I.S.O., 40 Cotswold Road, Belmont, Surrey.

THE INQUIRER

All letters and manuscripts for the Editor must reach the Office not later than Monday morning for publication the same week. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the sender.

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News Review—(Continued)

at Cairn o' Mount at 11.30 a.m. for an open-air service on the highest point on the way, conducted by the Rev. S. E. Bowen. The evening service in Aberdeen was conducted by the Rev. W. B. Tavenor, assisted by the Rev. S. E. Bowen.

Welsh National Eisteddfod: The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales was held this year at Ebbw Vale, Monmouthshire. One of the features of this important annual event is the hiring of tents for one week by various educational, social, and religious movements, thus giving the many visitors an opportunity of acquainting themselves with the aims and objects of such movements. For the first time the two Unitarian Societies in Wales combined forces and hired a tent, which was staffed during the week by ministers, students, and lay people. Lindsey Press books and Welsh Unitarian literature were sold. Hundreds of visitors took advantage of the free distribution of propaganda pamphlets. A well-known Fleet Street journalist, Mr. Hannen Swaffer, visited the tent, and in his Eisteddfod notes in a national daily newspaper said: "Most denominations were represented, even the Unitarians". The officers of both the societies concerned consider the venture was well worth while, and hope to repeat the experiment in 1960, when the Eisteddfod will be held in Cardiff.

Gloucester: The annual Women's League service was held on September 7 in the evening, when in spite of some rain not long before 6.30 p.m. a very good congregation attended, and greatly enjoyed the conducting of the service by Mrs. J. H. M. Bartlett, of Stalybridge, whose address was based mainly on ideas contained in part of the Sermon on the Mount and the teaching of Jesus generally on what was our daily bread, wherein the simple things were seen to be the deep and profound, as against much of the activity of many today, which was wasted on the superficial and trivial. Mrs. Baker, of Gee Cross, sang solos in one of the finest and richest contralto voices it was a privilege to hear. The choir's anthem was "O lovely peace".

Stanford Street: October marks the beginning of a new era for the Blackfriars Mission and Stanford Street Chapel. Mr. John Wilson, who is well known for his work as secretary of the L.U.S.S. and as a lay preacher, has accepted an invitation to become part-time lay pastor of the Chapel and Mission.

First Presbyterian Church, Belfast: The foundation stone of the new Central Hall, Rosemary Street, Belfast, was laid on Saturday, September 6. After a brief service in the Church, conducted by the Rt. Rev. J. W. Dyer, Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and Dr. McLachlan, the congregation assembled on the adjacent building site. Miss A. McKinnack laid the foundation stone, and Dr. McLachlan, using the maul presented to Mr. G. K. Smith at the laying of the foundation stone of the old Central Hall in June, 1883, laid a commemorative stone recording the fact that the new hall takes the place of one destroyed by enemy action in May, 1941.

For the contractors, Mr. Thomas Buckley presented Miss McKinnack with an inscribed silver trowel. After the ceremony members and friends were entertained to tea by the Women's League. The Church is engaged in raising a minimum of £10,000 towards the cost of the new building. To date, over £7,000 has been pledged or subscribed.

ENJOY OCTOBER'S SUNNY DAYS. Book now for your late holiday at "Normanhurst", the small, friendly and comfortable Private Hotel in South Coast resort noted for its fine and mild climate. From 7 gns. weekly, including full board, early tea, fresh fruit, granities, etc. Twin beds, b. and c., Shumberland. Two comfortable Lounges. Breakfast in bed—nominal charge. Vegetarian if desired. Best position on Promenade, facing full South; near Sun-Lounge orchestra. Illustrated brochure and coloured town booklet on request. Recommended by Unitarians. **NORMANHURST, Sea-front, ST. LEONARDS, Sussex.** Telephone: Hastings 4784.

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